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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/686,546	10/11/2000	Charles E Covatch	10294-539001	5745

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EXAMINER

STASHICK, ANTHONY D

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3728

DATE MAILED: 05/20/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/686,546

Applicant(s)

COVATCH, CHARLES E

Examiner

Anthony D Stashick

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 December 2001.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☒ The proposed drawing correction filed on 12 December 2001 is: a) ☒ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-2, 4-7 and 9-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the German reference to Schabsky 1,103,811 (Schabsky '811) in view of Crowley 5,701,688. Schabsky '811 discloses all the limitations substantially as claimed including the following: an upper defining an opening (see Figure 1); the upper having a vamp with a proximal and distal end (see Figure 1, proximal end is that nearest the area of foot entry and distal end is that furthest away from area of foot entry.); an instep portion (that where 3 is generally located); the instep including a liner 5; a steel toe 1 positioned on the toe portion of the upper; an instep guard 2 positioned between the instep portion 3 and the liner 5 and extending from the proximal end to the distal end; the vamp is attached to the steel toe (see Figure 1) and an outsole attached to the upper to define a cavity for receiving the foot (see Figure 1). Schabsky '811 doesn't disclose the particulars of the instep guard. Crowley '688 teaches an instep guard 1 for covering the metatarsals. The instep guard having an elastic (see col. 2, lines 51-60) support 1 having the shape and size commensurate with the instep section of the footwear (see Figures and col. 2, lines n4-64). The elastic support having a plurality of hollow passages 4 formed by a first sheet 8 and a plurality of support members 4 extending from the first sheet and defining the hollow passages. The hollow passages are filled with air (see col. 2, lines 55-59) as well as being elongated (see col. 2, lines 51-55). The cross-section of the elongated passage has circular or ovoid shape (see Figure 4). The elastic support includes resilient material (see col. 2, lines 51-64). The outsole 14

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attached to upper to define cavity for foot. Therefore, it would have been obvious, to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made, to make the instep guard of Schabsky '811 out of elastic material with hollow passages and supports, as taught by Crowley '688, to protect the instep from impact and aid in better cushioning the blow of the impact through the air used within the hollow passages.

3. Claims 3 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over the references as applied to claims 1 and 2 in paragraph 2 above. The references as modified and applied to claims 1 and 2 in paragraph 2 above disclose all the limitations of the claims except for the instep guard comprising a second sheet connected to the first sheet by the support members and the elongated passages having two different cross-sections. With respect to the second sheet attached to the first by the support members, it is well known in the art of shock protection that air filled chambers, such as that used in what is typically termed "bubble wrap", can be contained between two sheets of material with the support members connecting the two sheets of material to better distribute the weight and impact force over a greater area. Therefore, it would have been obvious to place a second sheet of material on top of the support members and connected to the support members to better distribute the force of the impact over a greater area of the protector. With respect to the cross-section being different in different elongated passages, it appears that it would have been a mere matter of testing and optimization as well as design choice to find what particular cross-section or combination of cross-sections would give the desired cushionability and impact protection.

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments filed December 12, 2001 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant's argument that neither Schabsky nor Crowley teaches the use of an instep guard extending from the distal to proximal ends of the vamp, which is attached to the toe portion of the steel

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toe in not clearly understood. Schabsky clearly shows the distal end of the vamp attached to the steel toe (See Figure 1) and also teaches the instep guard located between the lining and vamp as well as the instep guard extending from the proximal to the distal end of the vamp. The other arguments, as well, have been addressed in the rejections above.

Conclusion

5. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

Telephone inquiries regarding the status of applications or other general questions, by persons entitled to the information, "should be directed to the group clerical personnel and not to the examiners. In as much as the official records and applications are located in the clerical section of the examining groups, the clerical personnel can readily provide status information without contacting the examiners", M.P.E.P. 203.08. The Group clerical receptionist number is (703) 308-1148.

If in receiving this Office Action it is apparent to applicant that certain documents are missing, e.g., copies of references cited, form PTO-1449, form PTO-892, etc., requests for copies of such papers or other general questions should be directed to Tech Center 3700 Customer Service at (703) 306-5648, email CustomerService3700@uspto.gov.

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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Anthony D Stashick whose telephone number is 703-308-3876. The examiner can normally be reached on Tuesday through Friday from 8:30 am until 4:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mickey Yu can be reached on 703-308-2672. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9302 for regular communications and 703-872-9303 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-1148.

Other helpful telephone numbers are listed for applicant's benefit.

Allowed Files & Publication	(703) 305-8322
Assignment Branch	(703) 308-9287
Certificates of Correction	(703) 305-8309
Drawing Corrections/Draftsman	(703) 305-8404/8335
Fee Increase Questions	(703) 305-5125
Intellectual Property Questions	(703) 305-8217
Petitions/Special Programs	(703) 305-9282
Terminal Disclaimers	(703) 305-8408
Informal Fax for 3728	(703) 308-7769

If the information desired is not provided above, or has been changed, please do not call the examiner (this is the latest information provided to him) but the general information help line below.

Information Help, line	1-800-786-9199
Internet PTO-Home Page	http://www.uspto.gov/



Anthony D Stashick
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3728

ADS
May 16, 2002

Attachment for PTO-948 (Rev. 03/01, or earlier)
6/18/01

The below text replaces the pre-printed text under the heading, "Information on How to Effect Drawing Changes," on the back of the PTO-948 (Rev. 03/01, or earlier) form.

INFORMATION ON HOW TO EFFECT DRAWING CHANGES

1. Correction of Informalities -- 37 CFR 1.85

New corrected drawings must be filed with the changes incorporated therein. Identifying indicia, if provided, should include the title of the invention, inventor's name, and application number, or docket number (if any) if an application number has not been assigned to the application. If this information is provided, it must be placed on the front of each sheet and centered within the top margin. If corrected drawings are required in a Notice of Allowability (PTOL-37), the new drawings **MUST** be filed within the **THREE MONTH** shortened statutory period set for reply in the Notice of Allowability. Extensions of time may **NOT** be obtained under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a) or (b) for filing the corrected drawings after the mailing of a Notice of Allowability. The drawings should be filed as a separate paper with a transmittal letter addressed to the Official Draftsperson.

2. Corrections other than Informalities Noted by Draftsperson on form PTO-948.

All changes to the drawings, other than informalities noted by the Draftsperson, **MUST** be made in the same manner as above except that, normally, a highlighted (preferably red ink) sketch of the changes to be incorporated into the new drawings **MUST** be approved by the examiner before the application will be allowed. No changes will be permitted to be made other than correction of informalities, unless the examiner has approved the proposed changes.

Timing of Corrections

Applicant is required to submit the drawing corrections within the time period set in the attached Office communication. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Failure to take corrective action within the set period will result in ABANDONMENT of the application.